

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ0274

PAGE 01 HARARE 00665 01 OF 02 131648Z
ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	WHA-00	SRPP-00	EAP-00	EUR-00
	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DRL-02
	G-00	SAS-00	/005W				

-----73F991 131648Z /48

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1199
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000665

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR DIRECTOR FRAZER
PARIS FOR NEARY
LONDON FOR GURNEY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/06/12

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: SADC-PF ISSUES HARD-HITTING ASSESSMENT OF ZIMBABWEAN
ELECTION PROCESS, WHILE SOUTH AFRICAN TEAM ENDORSES MUGABE VICTORY

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF MATT HARRINGTON. REASONS:
1.5 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

1. (U) ON MARCH 13, THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM ISSUED A TOUGH
CRITIQUE OF THE ZIMBABWEAN ELECTION PROCESS, SAYING THE ELECTION
CAMPAIGN WAS MARRED BY INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN ALL PROVINCES OF
THE COUNTRY, PREDOMINANTLY AGAINST MDC SUPPORTERS. THE SADC-PF
CONCLUDED THAT THE CLIMATE OF "INSECURITY" PREVAILING IN ZIMBABWE
SINCE THE JUNE 2000 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS PREVENTED AN ASSESSMENT
THAT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS HAD COMPLIED WITH SADC'S ELECTORAL NORMS
AND STANDARDS. THE SOUTH AFRICAN OBSERVER MISSION, ON THE OTHER
HAND, DESCRIBED THE ELECTION OUTCOME AS A LEGITIMATE EXPRESSION OF
THE WILL OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE AND CALLED ON THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY TO ACCEPT THE RESULT. END SUMMARY.

SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

2. (U) THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM'S 70-MEMBER ELECTION
OBSERVATION MISSION ISSUED ON MARCH 13 A HARD-HITTING STATEMENT ON
THE ZIMBABWEAN ELECTORAL PROCESS (FAXED TO AF/S). THEIR KEY
FINDINGS ARE LISTED BELOW:

--THE ELECTION PERIOD WAS CHARACTERIZED BY HIGH LEVELS OF
POLARIZATION AND POLITICAL INTOLERANCE, LACK OF COMMUNICATION
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 00665 01 OF 02 131648Z
AGAINST STAKEHOLDERS AND LACK OF FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION TO THE
ELECTORATE, WHICH ARE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRACY TO
PREVAIL;

--THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN WAS MARRED BY INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN ALL
PROVINCES OF THE COUNTRY, PERPETRATED PRIMARILY AGAINST MDC
SUPPORTERS OR PERCEIVED OPPONENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT;

--THERE WERE NUMEROUS CASES OF ALLEGED TORTURE, ARSON, ASSAULT, AND
INCIDENCES OF FALSE IMPRISONMENT, INCLUDING ABDUCTION OF MDC
POLLING AGENTS. IN ONE SUCH INCIDENT, A SADC-PF OBSERVER TEAM
INTERVENED WHEN POLICE IN MASHONALAND CENTRAL DETAINED 24 MDC
ELECTION AGENTS WHO WERE ON THEIR WAY TO HARARE TO VOTE;

--ACTS OF VIOLENCE APPEARED TO BE SYSTEMATICALLY EMPLOYED BY YOUTH
AND WAR VETERANS WITH CAMPS DOTTED AROUND THE COUNTRY;

--THE USE OF RIOT SQUADS TO DISPERSE POTENTIAL VOTERS IN HARARE
RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE IMPARTIALITY OF THE POLICE;

--THE RULING PARTY'S CAMPAIGN WAS RELATIVELY UNINTERRUPTED WHILE
SOME OPPOSITION PARTY MEETINGS WERE CANCELLED OR INTERRUPTED;

--THE REDUCTION OF POLLING STATIONS IN URBAN AREAS HAD A MAJOR
IMPACT, RESULTING IN CONGESTION WITH SOME PEOPLE SPENDING MORE THAN

48 HOURS IN QUEUES BECAUSE OF THEIR SHEER DETERMINATION TO VOTE. A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF THE ELECTORATE WAS UNABLE TO VOTE AS A RESULT OF LOGISTICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER IMPEDIMENTS;

--FREE MOVEMENT OF PARTY AGENTS WITH BALLOT BOXES WAS COMPROMISED BY INTIMIDATION AND REPORTED ABDUCTIONS IN SOME PROVINCES;

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HARARE 00665 01 OF 02 131648Z

--THERE WAS LACK OF ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC MEDIA BY POLITICAL PARTIES OTHER THAN THE RULING PARTY;

--THE MISSION CONCLUDED THAT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS "COULD NOT BE SAID TO ADEQUATELY COMPLY WITH THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR ELECTIONS IN THE SADC REGION" AND URGED SADC HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT TO URGENTLY ENGAGE THE LEADERSHIP OF ZIMBABWE TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION.

SOUTH AFRICAN OBSERVER MISSION

13. (U) SOUTH AFRICA'S OBSERVER MISSION DELIVERED ON MARCH 13 A DISAPPOINTING "INTERIM" STATEMENT ON THE ZIMBABWEAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. SPEAKING IN A ROOM OVERFLOWING WITH INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL JOURNALISTS AND MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY, DELEGATION LEADER SAM MOTSUENYANE SAID THE INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS HAD BEEN THREATENED BY THE "REGULATORY FRAMEWORK," AND THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN HAD BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY POLARIZATION, TENSION, VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION. HE CRITICIZED

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ0279

PAGE 01 HARARE 00665 02 OF 02 131648Z
ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	WHA-00	SRPP-00	EAP-00	EUR-00
	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DRL-02
	G-00	SAS-00	/005W				

-----73F9AB 131648Z /48

O 131604Z MAR 02
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1200
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 000665

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR DIRECTOR FRAZER
PARIS FOR NEARY
LONDON FOR GURNEY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/06/12

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#)

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HARARE 00665 02 OF 02 131648Z

SUBJECT: SADC-PF ISSUES HARD-HITTING ASSESSMENT OF ZIMBABWEAN ELECTION PROCESS, WHILE SOUTH AFRICAN TEAM ENDORSES MUGABE VICTORY

THE "SO-CALLED" INDEPENDENT MEDIA FOR DEMONSTRATING BIAS TOWARD THE MDC AND THE STATE MEDIA FOR LIMITING ITS COVERAGE OF THE OPPOSITION. HE DID NOT HAVE KIND WORDS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA, WHICH HE SAID HAD BEEN "OVERWHELMINGLY" BIASED IN FAVOR OF THE MDC.

14. (U) THE STATEMENT SOFTENED CONSIDERABLY FROM THAT POINT. MOTSUENYANE DESCRIBED AS "UNFORTUNATE" THE FACT THAT SOME VOTERS IN HARARE AND CHITUNGWIZA HAD BEEN TURNED AWAY FROM POLLING STATIONS, BUT HE ATTRIBUTED THIS TO "ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT," AN EXPLANATION WHICH ELICITED GUFFAWS FROM THE ASSEMBLED CROWD. MOTSUENYANE SAID HIS DELEGATION HAD BEEN HEARTENED BY THE MDC'S ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN AND BY THE "BIG" TURNOUT, FACTORS WHICH HAD "LEGITIMIZED" THE PROCESS. HE DESCRIBED THE OUTCOME AS A LEGITIMATE EXPRESSION OF THE WILL OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE AND CALLED ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ACCEPT THEIR VERDICT. MOTSUENYANE'S LISTENERS WERE CLEARLY DUMFBOUNDED AT HIS PRONOUNCEMENT OF LEGITIMACY, AND LET OUT A COLLECTIVE GROAN.

TENSE Q & A SESSION

15. (U) THE Q & A SESSION WHICH FOLLOWED BORDERED ON HOSTILE, AS BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS SUBJECTED MOTSUENYANE AND THE ACCOMPANYING MEMBERS OF HIS TEAM TO RIGOROUS QUESTIONING, SOMETIMES LAUGHING OUT LOUD AT THEIR RESPONSES. AN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALIST NOTED THAT A RANGE OF WELL-RESPECTED CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS HAD PROVIDED AMPLE DOCUMENTATION OF THE SERIOUSLY
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 00665 02 OF 02 131648Z
FLAWED ELECTION PROCESS, ASKED WHETHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION HAD MET WITH THEM AND, IF SO, HAD THOSE ORGANIZATIONS BEEN LYING OR HALLUCINATING? ONE QUESTIONER ASKED MOTSUENYANE TO ELABORATE ON THE "ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHTS" THAT HAD PREVENTED VOTERS IN HARARE AND CHITUNGWIZA FROM CASTING BALLOTS, WHILE ANOTHER INQUIRED POINTEDLY WHETHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT SERVED THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE WELL. AN INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION REPORTER DECLARED THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION APPEARED TO BE ENDORSING THE EXISTENCE OF LOWER STANDARDS FOR DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA. ASKED DIRECTLY WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF THE VIOLENCE, MOTSUENYANE SIMPLY REFUSED TO BE DRAWN ON THAT QUESTION.

COMMENT

16. (C) THE SADC-PF ASSESSMENT WAS APPROPRIATELY CRITICAL AND PROVIDED AMPLE DETAILS ON THE NUMEROUS FLAWS IN THE ELECTION PROCESS, WHILE CAREFULLY AVOIDING CONFERRING ANY LEGITIMACY ON THE OUTCOME. THEY DID NOT PULL ANY PUNCHES AND STATED EXPLICITLY THAT MDC SUPPORTERS WERE THE PREDOMINANT VICTIMS -- NOT THE PERPETRATORS -- OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE. WE EXPECT THE GOZ WILL IGNORE THE INDICTMENT FROM REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS AND, INSTEAD, FOCUS ON THE "ENDORSEMENT" FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN TEAM, WHOSE PERFORMANCE, FRANKLY, WE FOUND EMBARRASSING. MANY ZIMBABWEANS ARE PROFOUNDLY DISAPPOINTED -- BUT NOT SURPRISED -- BY THE STATEMENT FROM THE SOUTH AFRICANS, WHOM THEY HAD VIEWED AS THE ONLY REGIONAL COUNTRY CAPABLE OF PROTECTING THEM FROM THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. A SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIC ACTIVIST WHO WORKS CLOSELY WITH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IN THE REGION TOLD ME AFTERWARD THAT HE WAS DEEPLY EMBARRASSED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN TEAM'S ASSESSMENT. MOTSUENYANE EMPHASIZED SEVERAL TIMES THAT HIS DELEGATION'S REPORT WAS ONLY "INTERIM," BUT
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HARARE 00665 02 OF 02 131648Z
HIS TEAM HAS ALREADY CONFERRED ON MUGABE PRECISELY WHAT HE WAS COUNTING ON -- RECOGNITION BY SADC'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL HEAVYWEIGHT OF THE LEGITIMACY OF HIS ELECTION VICTORY.

SULLIVAN

CONFIDENTIAL

>